

Peter Adriaansz

No. 27 Structures I - XVI (2005)

Commissioned by: Crash ensemble (Structure XIII), Orkest de Volharding + Doelen Ensemble (Structure II), ensemble KORE (Structure IX), ensemble MAE (Structures VII & VIII), Jan Hage & Tatiana Koleva (Structure XVI), Asko Kamerkoor (Structure VIb) with financial support from the Netherlands Fund for the Performing Arts

Info/Program Note:

Structures I-XVI is a five-hour-long series of works, written in 2005, which deal with aspects of infinity and variable color-change. Subdivided into five size- and topic-related sets, the works can be performed individually or within a sequence and can be played by any set-up including electrical instruments and ranging from small chamber ensembles to large orchestras, with or without live-delay. The music is entirely notated according to the technique of 'available pitches': a technique in which a gamut of pitches is notated within time-segments and the musicians are left free to choose both pitch as well as entry.

In an attempt to create a perception of time, which is both timeless as well as tangible, each interval is linked to a set time-length (mostly based on multiplications of a minor second, but sometimes itself variable too) so that the distance of each traversed interval finds a natural correspondence in the time necessary to overlap it. Together with the flexibility of the individual entries this helps create an environment in which formal rigidity and personal freedom can co-exist and sound itself serve as the main protagonist.

The musicians all have one primary sound source (basically, straight tones), but should alternate this sporadically with a second sound source or dynamic curve. The sounds can then be channeled through a relatively simple form of electronic delay, from which the attacks have been removed. The delay basically serves as an extra acoustic space, reflecting upon what the musicians have played and, in return, serving as a source for the musicians to respond to.

One of the non-musical inspirations for the series of Structures was based on a paper by Roger Penrose, which he wrote in 1965 and which uses topological ideas to describe how a very massive object can collapse to a point, virtually get crushed under its own weight. When this happens, the outcome is a black hole. Penrose proved that there lies a point like no other at the very center of a black hole. This point is a space-time singularity. Here, the curvature is infinite and time ceases to exist. To an imaginary observer (of course, this would be totally impossible in reality) anybody falling into a black hole would seem to be freezing on the surface for ever and would never be aware of this state of being. This image of freezing and timelessness seemed appropriate to the inherent laws of these pieces as well.

Program note:

Structure XIII describes a simple cross-form, in which two lines approach the center from the extremities and then move outwards again. Each interval is linked to a set time-length so that the distance of the interval finds a natural correspondence in the time necessary to overlap it. The musicians all have one primary sound source (basically, straight tones), but should alternate this sporadically with a second sound source or dynamic curve. The piece is linked up to a relatively simple form of electronic delay, from which the attacks have been removed.

The music is entirely notated according to the so called technique of 'available pitches': a technique in which a gamut of pitches is notated within time-segments and the musicians are then 'free' to choose both pitch and time of entrance. The most important aspect being that they avoid entering at the same time, or playing similar pitches to any immediately surrounding them. The pieces as a whole strive to create an environment in which sounds can 'sound' and from musicians and audience alike they require no more than simple 'listening'.

Program note:

Structure II is part of a five-hour-long series of works, written in 2005, which deal with aspects of infinity and variable color-change. The piece is written in the shape of a diamond, in which two independent lines follow a linear trajectory from the center towards the extremities and then back again. The pitches are all derived from the harmonic spectrum on E, choosing seven of the first eight prime numbers when diverging and the first six uneven numbers when converging. The musicians all have one primary sound source (basically, straight tones), but should alternate this periodically with a second sound source or dynamic curve. The lengths of the individual entries are all variable according to the possibilities of each instrument.

instrumentation:

variable

duration:

400'

first performances:

Structure II:

Orkest de Volharding

Doelen Ensemble

April 21 2006

Muziekgebouw aan 't Ij, Amsterdam

Structure VII:

Ensemble MAE

November 13 2005

Muziekgebouw aan 't Ij, Amsterdam

Structure VIII:

Ensemble MAE

January 30 2006

Theater Frascati, Amsterdam

Structure IX:

Ensemble KORE

May 24 2006

La Sala Rossa, Montreal

Structure X:

Omnibus Ensemble

February 22 2007

Theater Illkhom, Tashkent

Structure XIII:

Crash Ensemble

April 6 2006

Beckett Center, Dublin

Structure XIV:

Omnibus Ensemble

February 22 2007

Theater Illkhom, Tashkent

Structure XV:

Omnibus Ensemble

February 22 2007

Theater Illkhom, Tashkent

Structure XVI:

Jan Hage & Tatiana Koleva

April 22 2006

Nicolaikerk, Utrecht

Structure VIb:

Asko Kamerkoor

May 10 2009

Arminiuskerk, Rotterdam

special features:

Performance requires stopwatch monitor on stage and optional live-delay